

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**24 JANUARY 2008****APPROVED 01/31/2008**

At 6:05 pm Chairman Cordes called the meeting to order. Present were Selectmen Gene Cordes, Donald Gates Jr, and Peter Bolduc; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the minutes for 17 January 2008. Motion was made to approve them as written by Gates. Bolduc seconded and the vote was approved 2-0-1 with Gates abstaining.
2. Selectmen discussed a response to information presented last week by Keith Stanton regarding cable funding for the return line from Fremont to the head end in Exeter. Selectmen discussed Stanton's proposal and its different components. There was discussion about the possibility that Verizon is selling cable TV services in Fremont without a franchise agreement. The information submitted is not fully clear, and it has been suggested that this type of issue would be brought to the NH Public Utilities Commission.

There was extensive discussion about the printing and mailing costs of the Annual Town Report and Monthly Town Newsletter. The Board talked about discontinuing mailing of both documents with so much more internet availability to residents. The Budget Committee had also discussed saving money by eliminating the additional copies being printed and mailed as well. Selectmen discussed placing a warrant article for consideration and discussion to determine how residents/voters feel about such a change. This will be drafted for the 2008 warrant, and would not become effective until 2009.

There was also discussion about not printing values in the even-numbered years of the Town Report now that all of Fremont's assessing information is available at the taxpayer terminal at the Town Hall, and all the time at the Vision Appraisal (www.visionappraisal.com) website on the internet.

Selectmen did not want to see Bulky Day eliminated, because it does take care of some 20 tons of bulky goods annually, perhaps more.

Selectmen also did not want to take taxpayer dollars and give it to Comcast such that it would only benefit Comcast subscribers. There is currently only a 70% market penetration of Comcast from the homes they go by, and that does not include the approximately 70+ homes they do not service at all. Jay Somers met with Cordes on Tuesday January 22nd and discussed the following points:

1. Polling is not done now. Comcast sees this as a possibility in the future such as obtaining feed back from subscribers on services or service options.
2. Return line to Exeter construction costs and time frame - Comcast is developing a side letter of agreement for a firm price of \$26,436 and completion date commitment to be determined, but in 2008.
3. Current play back capacity will continue until the return line is installed and brought into our building. They are intending to donate the current playback equipment and would do so in a side letter outside the contract.
4. They are comfortable with providing the funding for the live broadcast (PEG) channel equipment during the first year so that it could be operational when the installation of return line to Exeter is completed. Funding could occur from the first years franchise fee (say \$6,000) and the balance could be paid through the franchise related costs portion (add say \$4,000) of the monthly subscriber fee. Jay will have a cost breakdown on that and send it.

5. It would cost roughly \$10,000 to wire Old Ridge to the end of the street and an estimated additional \$40,000 to hook in the Raymond- and Sandown-fed Fremont residents (Treaty, Dakota, Pulaski, San Antonio, Prescott, Midnight Sun) into a Fremont feed. Both costs could be added to the franchise-related costs on the subscriber bill and paid by all subscribers. Jay will cost this out and provide a fee impact analysis to the Board. Somers thought the work could be done in one season as it is mostly equipment cost, and not a pole- and wire-construction type cost.
6. Assuming we did not bring the areas fed through Raymond and Sandown into the Fremont feed then they would be willing to write into the contract that should they sell of or otherwise discontinue Comcast services in those communities that they will notify Fremont and the new cable provider in Raymond and Sandown that they need to obtain a franchise license from Fremont.
7. Comcast is unaware of Verizon or any other company offering or providing cable TV services in Fremont. If there is any company doing that, then it should be brought by the Board, to the NH Public Utilities Commission.
8. The typographical errors are being corrected (addresses, the number of linear feet from the street that are free, etc.)
9. Free Comcast services to schools and municipalities are
 - a. basic cable services on drop at each building
 - b. data connections at schools and libraries only

This is not new information and is consistent with our prior understanding. The Town is currently paying for data connections at the Public Safety Complex and the Town Hall.

Somers is going to send additional information to the Board for their consideration at the meeting next week.

At 6:40 pm Jack Downing came into the meeting. He has been to several Planning Board meetings and the Planning Board recommended him for a full board member position appointment by the Board of Selectmen. A call was made to the Clerk's office to see what term/position was available.

There was discussion about his interaction with the Board, and Downing's observations at recent meetings. Downing felt that the Board was a good group of individuals to work with and was interested in becoming more involved.

Selectmen told Downing that they were very appreciative of his coming forward for the position. Once a term/position is received from the Clerk, the Selectmen said they will sign an appointment form. The Clerk will then contact Downing so that he can be sworn in. Downing thanked the Board and left the meeting at approximately 6:55 pm.

Selectmen learned after Downing's departure that there was a full board membership on the Planning Board through March 2010, which would fill the remainder of Larry Stilwell's term. Motion made by Bolduc and seconded by Gates to appoint John "Jack" Downing to a two year term on the Fremont Planning Board through March 2010. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

There were no Department Heads present at 7:00 pm.

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3. Gates moved to continue to seal the Session II non-public minutes from January 17, 2008 indefinitely, to follow-up the discussion last week. Bolduc seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

4. Selectmen reviewed the 2008 Town Meeting warrant including questions on polling hours which were researched by the Town Clerk after last weeks discussion. There needs to be a question posed on the warrant to see if the voters want to place a question on the State election ballot to change the polling hours, and if that is voted in the affirmative, a question would be placed on the November 2008 General Election ballot.

A second question will go on the warrant to see if voters want to change the polling hours for all local elections. It is currently 8:00 am to 7:00 pm; and the question poses to open at 7:00 am and close at 7:00 pm. With the article on the warrant it can be discussed and could be changed on the floor as well. Selectmen discussed keeping polls open until 8:00 pm as well.

If the local question passes, we must notify the NH Secretary of State that it was voted in the affirmative, and ask for it to be placed on the General Election ballot.

5. Selectmen reviewed additional budget information.

Warrant article recommendations: There are two new social service agencies, Sea Care and Great Bay Services, each requesting \$2,000. Selectmen discussed them, including that Sea Care offered assistance with medications, which is not a program funded by any other of the social service agencies. Selectmen decided to recommend both items, each in the amount of \$2,000; to let the voters decide on them. The Budget Committee did not recommend either item.

Carlson discussed the budget presentation with all elected town officer salaries removed. After lengthy discussion, and ease of presentation, the amounts will be actually voted within the operating budget, and a warrant article will be prepared that just recognized each position and its accompanying pay rate.

The Election and Registration revised budget has been prepared and also reviewed by the Town Clerk and was re-written to include the additional four (4) election workers at \$110/day each for a total of \$440; and a set of five additional ballot booths for \$900 to bring Fremont into compliance with the mandated number of booths for the registered voters we have. The \$900 item will be listed under 1-4140-100 New Equipment.

Bolduc moved to recommend the new total number for Election and Registration of \$11,715. Gates seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

There was discussion about the cost of living increases that were not recommended by the Budget Committee.

Non-Public Session

At 8:00 pm motion was made by Gates and seconded by Bolduc to enter non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to discuss a matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the body or agency itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

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Selectmen discussed a tax hardship matter and no decisions were made.

At 8:10 pm motion was made by Gates and seconded by Bolduc to return to public session.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the manifests for January 25, 2008. Bolduc moved to approve the payroll manifest of \$19,241.46 and accounts payable manifest \$88,377.30 dated for 25 January 2008. Gates seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.
2. Selectmen reviewed the final 2007 accounts payable manifest dated 31 December 2007 in the amount of \$12,370.13. Gates moved to approve it. Bolduc seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.
3. Selectmen signed outgoing correspondence to Iacozzi and Torromeo regarding the 2004 tax lien property on Karlin Road.
4. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.
5. The public budget hearing is posted to begin with the Town budget on Wednesday February 6, 2008 at 7:30 pm; to be followed by the School budget on Thursday February 7, 2008 at 7:30 pm. The Budget Committee will meet both evenings beginning at 7:00 pm to review any petition warrant articles submitted.
6. Selectmen discussed some of the goals for 2008, and will further work on a list to be followed-up on next week.
7. The sign-up period for Town and School District Offices runs through Friday February 1, 2008. Sign ups are to be done with the Town Clerk or School District Clerk. The Town Clerk is open on Friday February 1 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm for filing purposes only. She has regular hours that day from 8:30 am to 12 noon as well.
8. Selectmen reviewed a variety of nature photographs provided by Matthew Thomas and Bob & Janice O'Brien for the cover of the 2007 Town Report. Selectmen chose a photograph taken by Matthew Thomas of "Winter" on South Road. The Board discussed some of the topics to be covered in the Selectmen's Report for the Town Report as well.
9. Selectmen reviewed the equalization study from NH DRA. The ratio for 2007 is 96.8%. Carlson advised the Board that she met with Keith Gagnon of the NH Department of Revenue Administration last week regarding the study. Gagnon presented some information indicating that the median numbers also look good, but in the next couple of years there will need to be some adjustments to the land values.
10. Cordes reported on the facilities Long Range Planning Committee meeting held last night at Ellis School.
11. An appointment form was prepared for Jack Downing for a two year term on the Planning Board. Selectmen signed this and will forward it to the Town Clerk.
12. Selectmen discussed the School District budget as it pertains to the Truant Officer, and wanted to follow-up with Chief Janvrin in that regard. There had been discussion at a recent Budget Committee meeting regarding a line item allowance of \$1.00 left for the Truant Officer (under Attendance).

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Selectmen were concerned if a Police Officer was doing that and there was no funding budgeted for it, how was the officer being paid (currently Reese Bassett); and how much of his time needed to be dedicated to school issues. The Board will follow-up with Chief Janvrin at a future meeting.

13. Selectmen reviewed several of the departmental town reports submitted to date.

NEXT WEEK

The Budget Committee meets at 6:00 pm on Wednesday January 30, 2008.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Thursday January 31, 2007 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Gates to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator

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24 JANUARY 2008

Minutes of Non-Public Session

In: 8:00 pm

Present: Gene Cordes, Peter Bolduc, Donald Gates Jr
Heidi Carlson

Selectmen discussed a tax hardship matter. No decisions were made.

Out: 8:10 pm